

Message Text

SECRET

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 081023

E.O. 11652: X-GDS 2

TAGS: PINT, IT, PFOR

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ON THE RED BRIGADES

REF: ROME 5377

1. IN RESPONSE TO LA ROCCA'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
WE MAY HAVE ON THIS SUBJECT, THE EMBASSY MAY DELIVER A
BLIND MEMORANDUM CLASSIFIED SECRET UITH THE TEXT OF PARAS
3 AND 4 BELOW. THE EMBASSY SHOULD TELL LA ROCCA THAT THE
MEMORANDUM HAS BEEN ASSEMBLED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE BASIS
OF RAW MATERIAL PROVIDED BY THE ITALIAN SERVICES AND IS
A VALID SUMMARY OF ALL THAT WE HAVE ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. THE EMBASSY MAY ALSO WISH TO REVIEW CAREFULLY THE
EXCELLENT UNCLASSIFIED STUDY OF THE RED BRIGADES PREPARED
BY RSO BRUNETTI IN FEBRUARY 1978, WITH A VIEW TO PROVIDING
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A COPY OF THE FIRST 71 PAGES TO LA ROCCA, AFTER DELETING
THE NAME OF THE AUTHOR AND PERHAPS SEVERAL PASSAGES
REGARDING ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION. THIS SEEMS TO
US TO BE A VERY IMPRESSIVE SYNTHESIS OF THE BACKGROUND
AND DOCTRINE OF THE RED BRIGADES, POINTING TOWARD SUCH
AN EVENT AS THE MORO KIDNAPPING, AND WHICH MAY BE OF
INTEREST TO THE PRESIDENCY AS AN INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS

BASED ON OPEN SOURCES.

3. QUOTE. AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THAT LEFT TERRORISM IN ITALY IS ESSENTIALLY A DOMESTIC PHENOMENON, THE WORK OF SMALL CLANDESTINE GROUPS SUPPORTED IN VARYING DEGREES BY LARGE NUMBERS OF MEMBERS OF OPEN ORGANIZATIONS OF THE EXTREME LEFT. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THE TERRORISTS HAVE LOOSE CONTACTS WITH THE WEST GERMAN R;D ARMY FACTION BUT NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY WORK TOGETHER OPERATIONALLY. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY COLLABORATION WITH ARAB TERRORISTS. MEMBERS OF THE RED BRIGADES APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH CZECH INTELLIGENCE BUT FOREIGN CONTACTS ARE NEITHER MOTIVATING NOR A DIRECTING FORCE OF ITALIAN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT LEAST TWO MEMBERS OF THE RED BRIGADES HAVE BEEN SHELTERED IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND OTHER MEMBERS MAY HAVE BEEN TRAINED THERE, BUT WE DO NOT HAVE THE NAMES OF SUCH PERSONS. THE CZECH EMBASSY AT ROME HAS HAD SOME KIND OF CONTACT WITH THE RED BRIGADES BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY DIRECTION FROM THIS SOURCE; THE CONTACT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY A CZECH INTELLIGENCE-COLLECTION OPERATION.

4. ITALIAN TERRORISTS HAVE MOVED OVER THE NORTHERN FRONTIERS INTO AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND AND FRANCE, TO BE HELPED BY ITALIANS LIVING ABROAD OR BY OTHERS, AT SUCH
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TIMES AS THEY HAVE HAD TO LEAVE ITALY. THERE IS NO CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT ITALIAN TERRORISTS OTHERWISE NEED OR RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM ABROAD, OTHER THAN THE REFERENCES TO LIMITED CZECH SUPPORT ALREADY MENTIONED. END QUOTE.
COOPER

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